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C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 008240

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/05/2015

TAGS: PREL GM FR MK DA EUN

SUBJECT: FRENCH REMAIN UNDECIDED ON MACEDONIA'S EU CANDIDACY

REF: A. SKOPJE 1411

1B. STATE 219159

1C. USEU TODAY 12/5/05

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Josiah Rosenblatt for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Poloff discussed reftel B points with MFA DAS-equivalent for External Community Relations Caroline Ferrari. Ferrari said that the GOF has not yet decided if it will support the granting of candidate status to Macedonia as recommended on November 9 by the Commission. Ferrari said that the GOF continues to pose questions about whether the EU is ready to enlarge further, and that its concerns about granting candidate status to Macedonia remain the same as those they expressed at least week's COREPER meeting. That is to say, continued Ferrari, that the EU must consider Macedonia's candidacy in the context of larger European questions that remain unresolved in the wake of the French and Dutch "nos" to the constitutional treaty, for example on how to finance enlargement and streamline EU institutions to function better in an enlarged EU. COMMENT: Ferrari's comments on the need to modernize both the EU's budget and its institutions before any further enlargement reflect repeated public remarks over the summer by President Chirac, Prime Minister de Villepin, and Foreign Minister Douste-Blazy. For the GOF, a granting of candidate status to Macedonia would be equivalent to giving the go-ahead for another round of enlargement, something the French do not yet appear ready to do. END COMMENT.

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Stapleton